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THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE ACADEMY

This article has been contributed by the Australian Defence Force Academy.

BACKGROUND

The Australian Defence Force Academy, located in Canberra, commenced its activities in January 1986 and is now the centre for tertiary education for the Armed Services. The single Service Colleges which previously performed this function are now responsible for providing a purely military education and professional training.

From their foundation, the Royal Military College (1911) and the Royal Australian Naval College (1913) provided general education for cadets as well as professional training, except during the two World Wars when the normal courses were curtailed. After World War II, each of the three Armed Services adopted, as policy, that the educational standards should be raised for officers in training.

The establishment of the Royal Australian Air Force College in 1947 was the first move to provide a tertiary level education for officer cadets. The College developed into the RAAF Academy and from 1963 Academy graduates were required to complete a Bachelor's degree in Science from the University of Melbourne, in addition to their flying training and military studies.

Two decades of improvements in courses and standards at the Royal Military College (RMC) led to an agreement, in 1967 between the Department of Defence and the University of New South Wales, under which they would co-operate to further develop RMC into a degree-level institution. To that end, the University established the Faculty of Military Studies at RMC to conduct courses leading to the award of the University's degrees in arts, science and engineering.

Also in 1967, the University of New South Wales entered into an association with the RAN College enabling it to present approved courses. Subsequently, first year courses for certain University programs in arts, science and engineering were introduced. Successful cadets were sponsored by the Navy to complete Bachelor's degrees on the University's campus.

Concurrent with the developments at the RAN College and RMC, there was an inquiry by the Department of Defence into the feasibility of setting up a college for the joint education of officer cadets of the three Armed Services. Investigations on a wider scale followed, with the result that in 1974 the Commonwealth Government announced its intention of establishing a single tertiary institution for the Defence Force. Construction began in 1981 and the first officer cadets joined

the Academy in 1986.

Entry to the Academy as an officer cadet is by selection. Applications are invited from young men and women who are seeking careers as officers in the Armed Services, and who have the educational qualifications to gain entry to the University of New South Wales and meet certain physical and personal standards.

Undergraduate students are officer cadets of the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Regular Army and Royal Australian Air Force. In addition to their academic studies, officer cadets undertake programs of military training at the Academy and at Service training establishments.

Commencement

The first intake of 343 First Year Officer' cadets joined 174 Second Year and 142 Third Year officer cadets who transferred from the Royal Australian Naval College, Royal Military College and Royal Australian Air Force Academy. Together these young men and women formed the inaugural officer cadet body, termed the Corps of Officer Cadets.

Overseas students

A number of overseas students attend the Defence Academy. Overseas officer cadets who require English as a Second Language complete this course at the University of New South Wales prior to commencing first Year at the academy. The majority of overseas students come from New Zealand with Thailand and Singapore also represented during 1986.

Changes to service colleges

The advent of the Defence Academy has brought about the closure of the three single-Service officer training schemes which have rendered outstanding service to the Defence Force over many years. Their passing underlines the importance of the Defence Academy which is now to assume many of the roles and responsibilities formerly fulfilled by them. The establishments which closed at the end of 1985 were the Officer Cadet School, Portsea; the Engineer Cadet Squadron, RAAF Frognall and the element of No. 7 Stores Depot, RAAF Toowoomba.

Role

The role of the Defence Academy is to provide a balanced and liberal university education for officer cadets of the three Services, within a military environment which provides some initial professional military training. The Academy will also cater for higher post graduate studies for both military and civilian personnel.

The Defence Academy will be the source of over 40 per cent of the officer establishment of the Australian Defence Force. The officer cadet population will build up and is expected to peak at around 1,100 in 1989.

Compared with the previous single-Service arrangements the Defence Academy offers economies of scale with a broader and more appropriate range of academic courses and research. It also provides an environment within which young officers will develop a much better understanding of joint Service issues and the inter-dependencies that each Service has on the others. The friendships and associations that will be forged at the Defence Academy will cross Service boundaries, and will pay rich dividends in terms of inter Service co-operation and management in future years.

Academic integrity

Following an agreement signed on 7 May 1981, the University of New South Wales has accepted responsibility for the academic integrity of the Academy. The courses offered by the University College have been developed in close association with the Services to ensure that their needs will be met.

The academic year is divided into two sessions which together provide 33 weeks of study. This is consistent with practices in other Australian universities. Breaks during the year provide scope for leave, academic field trips, military tours and excursions, and adventurous training.

The following degrees of the University of New South Wales may be awarded to officer cadets of the Defence Academy:

Bachelor of Arts	BA
Bachelor of Arts with Honours	BA (Hons)
Bachelor of Engineering	BE (Elec)
	BE (Mech)
	BE (Civil)
Bachelor of Science	BSc
Bachelor of Science with Honours	BSc (Hons)

Arts and Science degree rules are liberal and permit major and minor Arts and Science subjects to be mixed.

Most officer cadets undertaking Arts and Science courses will be awarded degrees after three years. Students of merit may be offered transfer to an honours program which requires an additional year of study. Engineering courses follow a prescribed four year program.

Midshipmen and Air Force officer cadets studying aeronautical engineering, naval architecture or marine science will complete the last two years of their studies at either the University of New South Wales (in Sydney), Sydney University or the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Higher degrees are also offered; Masters Degrees by course work and/or research and Doctorates of Philosophy for original research. Other post graduate courses designed to provide continuing education for Service officers at varying stages of their careers are available. To help maintain the Service ethos and to provide opportunities for suitably qualified personnel, a small number of Service officers are seconded to the University as Honorary Visiting Fellows in most academic departments.

Military training

As soon as they join the Defence Academy, new officer cadets undertake three weeks of Common Military Training in which they acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for their early Service life.

At the end of each year a period of concentrated military training is undertaken by officer cadets. This period culminates in the Graduation Parade for third year officer cadets who have completed their training.

During academic sessions, six periods of Common Military Training have been incorporated in the weekly academic program to ensure officer cadets' military development continues during the year.

Common Military Training is conducted throughout the three years of an officer cadet's attendance at the Defence Academy and includes the following subjects:

- **Defence Studies.** This subject covers the development of each of the three Services and warfare in general. It also studies the place that Australia occupies in world affairs and emphasizes domestic and international affairs.
- **Military Communication Skills.** This subject introduces officer cadets to the style and format of written communication used by all three Services and gives them practice in formal speaking. Its object is to make each officer cadet confident and effective both in writing and in speaking.
- **Methods of Instruction.** This subject concentrates on the preparation and conduct of military instruction. Officer cadets are also introduced to the design and programming of military training courses.
- **Physical and Recreational Training.** this subject deals with fitness, strength and agility.
- **As sport plays an important part in Service life, officer cadets are required to obtain a coaching or refereeing qualification for at least one sport while at the Defence Academy.**
- **Competitions in a wide range of sports are conducted within the Defence Academy and teams are entered in most civilian competitions in Canberra.**
- **Drill and Ceremonial.** This subject engenders a knowledge of the customs and traditions of military ceremonial as well as self discipline and teamwork.
- **Weapon Training.** Operation and maintenance of the basic small arms Service weapons and weapons safety are covered in a series of courses.

Single-Service training

While officer cadets of all three Services live and work together at the Defence Academy they also undertake training that is relevant to their parent Service. After an initial induction period at the Defence Academy, officer cadets are introduced to their chosen Service during a special familiarisation period and more time is set aside at the beginning of the second and third years for further single-Service training. This is conducted by the individual Services and its composition varies according to each Service's requirements.

The Corps of Officer Cadets

The organisation providing the military environment within which an officer cadet's qualities are developed is the Corps of Officer Cadets.

The Director of Military Education and Training (colonel or equivalent) is the Commanding Officer, Corps of Officer Cadets with this appointment rotated amongst the three Services. The Corps of Officer Cadets contains six squadrons, each commanded by a major (or equivalent) with the strength of up to 192 officer cadets. Each squadron is subdivided into four cadet divisions of 48 officer cadets, each commanded by an army captain (or equivalent). The smallest sub-unit in the Corps of Officer Cadets is a section of eight officer cadets, commanded by a senior officer cadet. Each squadron has a warrant officer class two (or equivalent) and a sergeant to assist the officer

commanding. The staff of the Corps of Officer Cadets is organised to ensure that an appropriate mix of Navy, Army and Air Force personnel is always maintained.

Under the supervision and guidance of the military staff, the day-to-day running of the Corps of Officer Cadets is the responsibility of the third year officer cadets. They fill senior and junior officer cadet command appointments within the Corps of Officer Cadets at wing, squadron, division and section levels. The responsibilities include matters relating to the administration and discipline of the Corps, as well as the co-ordination and administration of all sporting and social activities in which the Corps is involved.

Officer cadets are allotted to one of the six squadrons on joining the Corps of Officer Cadets. Throughout their time at the Defence Academy, officer cadets are mixed by Service, seniority and academic discipline. Each of the sub-units is therefore a combination of Navy midshipmen and Army and Air Force officer cadets.

Sports

Participation in sporting activities at the Defence Academy is designed to promote competition, teamwork, leadership,, strength, agility and endurance.

Defence Academy sports are not limited to team events. Individual excellence in such sports as athletics, swimming, sailing and shooting, among others, is encouraged. All officer cadets are required to play one major sport in both summer and winter.

Library

The Australian Defence Force Academy Library was founded on collections transferred from the Bridges Memorial Library at the Royal Military College. Materials were also drawn from the libraries at the RAN College and the RAAF Academy.

The collections and services of the Academy library support research and undergraduate and postgraduate study within the University College. Approximately 190,000 volumes are held and there are current subscriptions to some 2,000 periodicals.

Computer centre

The Academy Computer Centre provides computer processing and programing support services for teaching, research, and administration throughout the Academy. In addition it offers a program and data entry service.

Prospects

The Defence Academy has made an excellent start under challenging and often difficult circumstances and all objectives are being met. A spirit of co-operation and determination to succeed exists amongst the military and academic staff and the development of esprit de corps amongst officer cadets from the three Services has exceeded expectations.

The Academy represents one of the most significant long-term military developments that has taken place in Australia in recent decades. It is an imaginative and exciting advancement in the training and education of the officer corps of the Australian Defence Force.

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